

News Release

USDA Forest Service

Kaibab National Forest
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KAIBAB NATIONAL FOREST BANS CAMPFIRES

WILLIAMS, AZ—As another precautionary step, forest officials have decided to prohibit campfires and smoking on the Tusayan and Williams districts effective Tuesday, June 27 at 8 a.m. The new restrictions include a ban on the use of charcoal grills and open-flame stove fires; smoking is allowed only in vehicles and buildings. Pressurized liquid or gas stoves, lanterns, and heaters meeting safety specifications are allowed.

The fire danger level is now at extreme for the Tusayan and Williams districts, and very high for the North Kaibab district. The Kaibab is also stepping-up the number of forest patrols. Forest employees will be patrolling the two districts and contacting forest visitors to ensure that they are aware of restrictions and complying with them.

Kaibab forest officials have not closed the forest to public access (with the exception of the Bill Williams Mountain for the protection of the watershed) for several reasons. The number of fire starts has been low and kept small in size. To date there have been 12 human-cause fires on the entire forest since January 1. Compliance with campfire and smoking restrictions has been good, forest visitation has not been high, and the Kaibab is not close to a large urban area.

There were three fires on the Williams district over the June 24 weekend—two caused by lightning, one human-caused (smoking related). All were about 2/10 of an acre in size and quickly contained.

Other restrictions still in place for the Tusayan and Williams ranger districts include welding or operating acetylene or other torches with open flames, use of explosives and cross country travel (off designated forest roads) by motorized vehicles (ATV).

Forest officials with the North Kaibab district have issued an emergency closure effective tomorrow, June 27 at 8 a.m. closing the entire district to public access. It will remain closed until further notice, due to fire and firefighting activity related to the Warm Fire.

Restrictions and closures will remain in effect until forest officials determine that conditions have changed sufficiently to reduce the risk of human-caused wildfires. Violation of these prohibitions is punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000, imprisonment of not more than 6 months, or both. The public is also reminded that fireworks are always prohibited on all national forest lands.

For current information on fire restrictions, closures or wildfires on the Kaibab National Forest call the Williams district office at 928 635-5600 or the City of Williams/Kaibab National Forest Visitor Center at 928 635-4061 or visit www.fs.fed.us/r3/kai. For additional information about fire restrictions on public lands in Arizona and New Mexico, call toll free 1-877-864-6985 or visit <http://gacc.nifc.gov/swcc/>.